

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The House of Representatives on Wednesday voted to send a compromise health insurance bill to the president that fails to expand the Children's Health Insurance Program, delays a 10 percent cut in Medicare payments to doctors by only six months and guts a provision that would have brought equability to Central Coast doctors.

Congressman Sam Farr (D-Carmel) voted in favor of the bill, but was deeply disappointed at the weak provisions and the failure of the Senate to include the fix for Central Coast doctors.

He released the following statement after the vote:

"I voted in favor of the legislation because a vote against it would mean eliminating health insurance for 6 million children and cutting Medicare payment to doctors nationwide by 10 percent. But this bill is far from perfect. It delays the 10 percent pinch for doctors by only six months and fails to expand the vital Children's Health Insurance Program, extending S-CHIP at current levels until early 2009.

"For the Central Coast, the bill once again fails to fix the problem faced by our doctors who receive lower levels of Medicare compensation compared to those in neighboring counties. I struggled all year to include this fix in the bill, but the Senate blocked my solution in the bill they sent to the House.

"It's another devastating blow to our Central Coast doctors. I can only promise that I will continue to work with local doctors to fix this problem through my bill, H.R. 2484, and any other way possible."

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